

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF WISCONSIN

---

DEBORAH LAUFER,

Plaintiff,

v.

WOOD RIVER INN, INC.,

Defendant.

---

ORDER

20-cv-661-slc

David Volkman, the apparent owner of pro se defendant Wood River Inn, Inc., has filed an answer and a motion to dismiss, summarily denying plaintiff Deborah Laufer's allegations that the corporation's website violates the Americans With Disabilities Act and seeking an explanation for her claims. Dkts. 8, 10. However, federal law requires corporations like Wood River to appear by counsel, and it prohibits a non-lawyer like Volkman from representing or speaking for an incorporated party in litigation. *Philos Techs., Inc. v. Philos & D, Inc.*, 645 F.3d 851, 858 (7<sup>th</sup> Cir. 2011). Therefore, the pleadings are not complete. Without an attorney, Wood River will not be allowed to respond to the claims against it, even through Volkman. In addition, without an attorney, the corporation will likely be vulnerable to a motion for default judgment because it cannot participate in this case.

On August 21, 2020, I granted Mr. Volkman's motion for an extension of time within which to answer the complaint and set the response deadline for October 23, 2020. That date still stands and should allow a sufficient period of time for Wood River to retain an attorney. If Wood River does not have the financial resources to pay for an attorney, it may be in its (and Volkman's) best interest to contact local legal aid organizations to inquire about pro bono representation, but the court cannot assist in this effort. Wood River should advise the court

as soon as possible, but no later than October 23, 2020, whether it has retained legal counsel or will be proceeding pro se.

Entered this 3<sup>rd</sup> day of September, 2020.

BY THE COURT:

/s/

---

STEPHEN L. CROCKER  
Magistrate Judge